

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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SUBJECT: THE UNCERTAIN PERUVIAN POLITICAL CLIMATE

REF: (A) LIMA 4831, (B) LIMA 4838

1. SUMMARY: ATTENTION FOCUSES ON GOP CABINET MEETING JUNE 6 WHICH IS EXPECTED TO PRODUCE DECISIONS ABOUT RESTORING DEMOCRATIC GUARANTEES. SUTEP'S TEACHERS' STRIKE REMAINS A PROBLEM. LEFTIST PARTIES SO FAR SEEM DISPOSED TO REMAIN IN THE RACE WHILE THE GOP GENERALLY CONTINUES TO TALK AND ACT AS THOUGH THE JUNE 18 SCHEDULE WILL BE MAINTAINED. END SUMMARY.

2. PERUVIAN POLITICS ARE IN A STATE OF SUSPENSION AS POLITICAL OBSERVERS WAIT FOR A RESTORATION OF PRESS FREEDOM AND THE RETURN TO AN OPEN ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN. JOURNALISTS AND POLITICIANS EXPECTED, IN FACT, THAT AT LEAST A PARTIAL RESTORATION OF CIVIL LIBERTIES MIGHT BE ANNOUNCED OVER THE WEEKEND. PERU'S FOOTBALL VICTORY JUNE 3 OVER THE SCOTS IN ARGENTINA CAUSED A LIFTING OF THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CURFEW THE NIGHT OF JUNE 3-4 BUT SUNDAY THE GOP RESTORED THE MIDNIGHT TO 4 A.M. SECURITY MEASURE. ATTENTION NOW HAS FOCUSED ON THE TUESDAY (JUNE 6) CABINET MEETING WHICH MAY APPROVE RESTORATION OF CERTAIN SUSPENDED GUARANTEES, AND RESOLVE THE ISSUE OF WHETHER OR NOT THE GOP SHOULD BAR EITHER PARTIES (UDP, PSR, OR FOCEP) OR SPECIFIC CANDIDATES (E.G., RODRIGUEZ FIGUEROA) FROM TAKING PART IN THE JUNE 18 ELECTIONS. ALL PARTIES WILL THEN

HAVE TO DECIDE WHAT THEIR POSTURE WILL BE IF FACED WITH RESTRICTIONS ON THE CAMPAIGN.

3. THE TEACHERS' STRIKE OF SUTEP HAS COMPLICATED AN OTHERWISE TEMPORARILY QUIET LABOR SCENE. THE GOP ARRESTED 21 TEACHER UNION LEADERS WHO WERE MEETING AT SAN MARCOS UNIVERSITY JUNE 1 (REF A) AFTER A CLASH WITH STUDENTS THERE, ALTHOUGH SUTEP LEADER HORACIO ZEBALLOS APPARENTLY IS STILL AT LIBERTY. THE GOP ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT IT WOULD SUMMARILY FIRE TEACHERS FAILING TO ATTEND CLASSES JUNE 5 BUT AS YET WE HAVE NO RELIABLE ESTIMATES OF THE NUMBERS STILL SUPPORTING THE STRIKE.

4. DESPITE SPECIAL PRESSURES, THE LEFTIST PARTIES AS OF NOW DO NOT RPT NOT SEEM DISPOSED TO WITHDRAW FROM THE RACE. A PSR SPOKESMAN STATED JUNE 2 THAT HIS PARTY WILL REMAIN IN THE CAMPAIGN. THE HEAD OF PSR, RETIRED GEN LEONIDAS RODRIGUEZ FIGUEROA, IS STILL BEING SOUGHT BY THE POLICE AND APPARENTLY IS STILL IN PERU. UDP AND FOCEP LEADERS HAVE APPEALED TO THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION (JNE) FOR RESTORATION OF LIBERTIES, THE RELEASE OF THEIR DETAINED CANDIDATES AND RETURN OF THOSE EXILED. FORMER AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REP LAURA CALLER (ALSO APPARENTLY STILL SOUGHT BY THE POLICE) HAS CALLED ON JNE TO RESTORE CONSTITUTIONAL LIBERTIES. THE MOSCOW LINE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP) CLAIMS TWO OF ITS CANDIDATES ARE DETAINED, SIX MORE ARE SOUGHT BY THE POLICE, AND ONE LABOR LEADER, VALENTIN PACHO, EXILED, BUT PCP HAS GIVEN NO RPT NO INDICATION OF PULLING OF OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE RACE. THE PDC OF CORNEJO CHAVEZ ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE MAY 31 CALLING FOR STEPS TO OFFSET THE IMPACT OF THE NEW AUSTERITY MEASURES, THE RESTORATION OF LIBERTIES, AND THE RELEASE AND RETURN OF CANDIDATES. THE TINY LEFTIST GROUP (ARS) HAS DECLARED THAT ELECTIONS UNDER THE CURRENT SYSTEM ARE "INOPPORTUNE" ALTHOUGH IT HAS NOT RPT NOT YET FORMALLY BOWED OUT OF THE CAMPAIGN. (INTERNAL DIVISIONS IN ARS SUGGEST IT MIGHT NOT GAIN ENOUGH VOTES TO MAKE FURTHER CAMPAIGN EFFORTS WORTHWHILE).

5. THE PPC IS WATCHING CAREFULLY THE ELECTORAL PROCESS AND AS WE REPORTED, HAD CONSIDERED WITHDRAWAL. NONETHELESS, PROVIDED GUARANTEES ARE RESTORED, PPC PROBABLY WILL STAY IN THE RACE. TWO RETIRED MILITARY, GEN CARLOS BOBBIO CENTURIA AND ADM CARLOS SALMON, RESIGNED AS PPC CANDIDATES, BUT RETIRED AIR FORCE GEN ALBERTO THORNDIKE REPORTEDLY INTENDS TO STAY ON PPC'S LIST. APRA LEADERS AGAIN RECONFIRMED TO EMBASSY OFFICERS JUNE 2 THEIR PARTY'S INTENT TO REMAIN IN THE RACE IF MOST DEMOCRATIC GUARANTEES ARE RESTORED.

6. AN INTERESTING EDITORIAL APPEARED JUNE 4 IN THE GOP-CONTROLLED DAILY "LA PRENSA" ENTITLED "AND IF THERE IS NO CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY?" THE ARTICLE PROFESSEDLY EXPRESSING A

NON-OFFICIAL VIEW OBSERVED THAT A CONSTITUTION MIGHT BE DRAFTED BY EXPERTS AND PRESENTED TO THE PUBLIC IN A REFERENDUM IF THE POLITICAL/LABOR SITUATION DID NOT PERMIT HOLDING ELECTIONS. THERE SEEMS TO BE A MILD HINT OF "BLACKMAIL" HERE, AS THE GOP MAY BE USING THIS COMMENT TO INFORM ALL THE POLITICAL PARTIES THAT AN ALTERNATIVE PROCESS TO THE CONTITUENT ASSEMBLY IS BEING CONSIDERED AT LEAST IN SOME GOVERNMENT CIRCLES. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GOP-CONTROLLED MEDIA CONTINUE TO GIVE HEAVY COVERAGE TO ELECTION PREPARATIONS AND TO RUN COMMENTS OF POLITICAL LEADERS CRITICAL OF THE GOP IN THE PRESS, AS IF THE CAMPAIGN WERE TO RESUME SHORTLY.

DECON 6/5/79.
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